

Baseball Centennial

“Every boy in America could get a First-Day Cover”

This is a traditional first day cover exhibit for the 3-cent baseball stamp commemorating the Centennial of Baseball. On the morning of June 12, 1939, in Cooperstown, New York, Postmaster General James Farley sold the first sheet of Baseball Centennial stamps to Baseball Commissioner Kenesaw Landis. The sale kicked off a day of celebration by over 10,000 fans, highlighted by the opening of the Baseball Hall of Fame.



Dorothy Knapp hand painted cachet. Knapp was a high school art teacher from Rhinebeck, NY. Named by American First Day Cover Society as the top cachet maker for the first half of the 20th century.

The 1907 Mills Commission determined baseball was invented by Abner Doubleday in 1839 at Cooperstown, New York. Even though the results were questioned by many historians, the Baseball Centennial Commission Office was established in 1934 to determine how to honor the game and players during the summer of 1939. Three years later, the Cooperstown Chamber of Commerce passed a resolution requesting the Post Office Department issue a baseball stamp in connection with the celebration.

President Roosevelt supported the baseball stamp and said through the nation's sports pages that he wished "every boy in America could get a first-day cover." Newspapers ran articles on how to obtain a first day cover. For the first time, postmasters from across the country collected self-addressed envelopes and 3-cents payment from children and sent the requests to Cooperstown. These orders became known as "small boy orders."

Exhibit Plan

Maroon text boxes are used to introduce new sections.

I. Stamp Production - Stamp Design - Announcement - Printing II. First Day Activities - First Day Cancels - Unofficial Cancels - Cooperstown Event - Postmaster FDCs	III. First Cachets IV. Handcrafted Cachets - Hand Painted - Hand Drawn - Paste-on - Other Media - Every Boy a Cover	V. First Day Printed Cachets - Team Corner Cards - Advertisements - Commercial Cachet Makers (Alphabetic Order) - Post & Favor Cards VI. General Purpose Cachets - First Day Issue Theme - Other Events	VII. First Day Nationwide Sales VIII. Postal Usages - Domestic - International IX. Epilogue
---	--	---	---

Important items in exhibit are mounted on maroon mat.

Cachet production method is provided at end of line below cover.